

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants request confirmation of the documents submitted in the Information Disclosure Statement filed May 8, 2006.

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 2-4, 6-8, and 10-18 are pending in the present application. Claims 2, 6, 10, 11, and 15 are the independent claims.

Claims 1, 5, and 9 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 2, 6, 10, 11, and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Initially, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 2-4, 6-8, and 10-18 recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. In response, by the present Amendment, claims 2, 6, 10, 11, and 15 have been so rewritten. Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 12-14, and 16-18 variously depend from claims 2, 6, 11, and 15. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-4, 6-8, and 10-18 are now in allowable form.

Claims 1, 5, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,590,850 (Hedenberg) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,687,251 (Hoerner).

All rejections are respectfully traversed. It is to be appreciated that claims 1, 5 and 9 have been cancelled. Thus, the only remaining claims are those submitted to be in allowable form, for the reasons set forth above.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the independent claims patentably define the present invention over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action. However, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to such matters.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the


present application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 9-6-06

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